

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 SS-15 SP-02 IO-10

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DRAFTED BY USOAS:TETAYLOR/JWFORD:ATP
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 079813

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OAS, PFOR

SUBJECT: ORGANIZING FOR THE OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, MAY 8TH

REFERENCE: STATE 77748

FOR AMBASSADORS JORDEN AND MAILLIARD FROM ROGERS

1. THE PANAMANIAN INITIATIVE IN THE OAS PREPCOM LAST WEEK RESULTED IN A RECOMMENDATION THAT PUBLIC SPEECHMAKING BY FOREIGN MINISTERS BE REPLACED WITH CONVERSATIONS. UNFORTUNATELY, IT LEFT THE DOOR OPEN TO MEETINGS WHICH WOULD BE TOO FORMAL TO BE USEFUL -- I.E., PUBLIC MEETINGS WITH VERBATIM MINUTES. WHAT WE WANT TO ENSURE IS THAT THE ASSEMBLY QTE CONVERSATIONS UNQTE FOLLOW THE PRIVATE STYLE OF TLATELOLCO.

2. WE ARE CONSIDERING ASKING THE SECRETARY TO CONTACT A NUMBER OF FOREIGN MINISTERS, SUGGESTING A POSSIBLE AGENDA FOR THE CONVERSATIONS IN THE FIRST DAYS OF THE ASSEMBLY, THE ITEMS THAT THE MINISTERS SHOULD CONCENTRATE ON, AND ATTEMPTING TO OBTAIN A CONSENSUS NOT ONLY AS TO AGENDA
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BUT AS TO TYPE OF MEETING BEFORE THE FOREIGN MINISTERS

ARRIVE IN WASHINGTON.

3. SINCE THE INITIATIVE ON ELIMINATING THE SPEECH-
MAKING WAS PANAMA'S, WE WANT YOU TO DISCUSS NEXT STEPS
WITH TACK AND PITTLY BEFORE WE PROCEED FURTHER HERE. PLEASE
CABLE THE RESULTS OF YOUR CONVERSATIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

4. AMBASSADOR MAILLIARD IS COMPLETELY FAMILIAR WITH THE
PROBLEM. BUT IN CASE HE IS INACCESSIBLE, WE OFFER SUG-
GESTED TALKING POINTS: THIS IS AN IMPORTANT MOVE TOWARD
OAS REFORM; PANAMA IS TO BE CONGRATULATED. WE ARE PLEASED
THAT THE GRAND-STANDING IS LIKELY TO BE REDUCED AND THE
POSSIBILITY OF SERIOUS, PROBLEM-SOLVING DISCUSSIONS IN-
CREASED. WE BELIEVE THAT WE MUST BUILD ON THE RECOM-
MENDATION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE TO ASSURE THE SUC-
CESS OF THE CONVERSATIONS. FOR EXAMPLE, IT WOULD BE VERY
USEFUL TO GET BEFOREHAND SOME CONSENSUS ON AN AGENDA
FOR THE CONVERSATIONS. WE THINK THAT SUCH MAJOR ITEMS AS
THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE, THE TRADE BILL, THE URUGUAYAN PRO-
POSAL ON PRICES AND OTHER GA AGENDA ITEMS SHOULD BE IN-
CLUDED. WE ALSO EXPECT THE CUBA ISSUE TO BE BROUGHT UP.
ON PROCEDURES, WE THINK IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE START OFF
WITH PRIVATE MEETINGS, WITH NO VERBATIM RECORD, TO AVOID
THE NATURAL TENDENCY OF THE PARTICIPANTS TO TALK FOR THE
RECORD RATHER THAN TO EACH OTHER. NEVERTHELESS, THERE
COULD BE AN OPEN SESSION, AT WHICH ANY AGREEMENTS IN PRI-
VATE COULD BE ANNOUNCED AND MINISTERS COULD GIVE THEIR
COUNTRIES' POSITIONS. IN FURTHERANCE OF THESE GOALS, WE
ARE PLANNING TO CONTACT A NUMBER OF MINISTERS. BUT WE
WANTED TO GET PANAMA'S VIEWS. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING AGENDA, REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, COMMITTEES, PLANNING MEETINGS, ORGANIZATION & MANAGEMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE079813
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: TETAYLOR/JWFORD:ATP
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750122-0544
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750470/aaaacman.tel
Line Count: 91
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE 77748
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 SEP 2003 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <03 NOV 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ORGANIZING FOR THE OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, MAY 8TH
TAGS: PFOR, PORG, OAS
To: PANAMA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006